

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the final Office Action dated January 23, 2004 regarding the above-identified application, and the amendments above together with the remarks that follow are presented in a bona fide effort to respond thereto and address all issues raised in that Action.

Rejected claims 5, 6, 29, 30, 31 and 32 have been cancelled, obviating all of the rejections set forth in the latest Action. Applicants have also cancelled non-elected/withdrawn claims 13-18, 21, 22 and 28. However, Applicants reserve the right to submit divisional or continuation applications to pursue the rejected claims and/or the non-elected claims. The amendments to cancel claims reduce issues and place this case in condition for allowance, and they do not raise any new matter concern or any new issue requiring further search or consideration. Entry under Rule 116 is appropriate.

Upon entry of the above claim amendments, claims 7-10, 20 and 26 remain active in this application. Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of all of the remaining claims (para. #5 on page 4 of the Office Action). Accordingly, this case should now be ready to pass to issue; and Applicants respectfully request a prompt favorable reconsideration of this matter.

It is believed that this response addresses all issues raised in the January 23, 2004 Office Action. However, if any further issue should arise that may be addressed in an interview or obviated by an Examiner's amendment, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Applicants' representative at the number shown below.

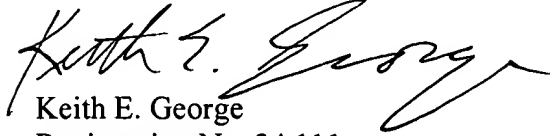
To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper,

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including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

MCDERMOTT, WILL & EMERY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith E. George", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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